



CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

831 Massachusetts Avenue, 2nd Fl., Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Telephone: 617 349 4683 Fax: 617 349 3116 TTY: 617 349 6112

E-mail: histcomm@cambridgema.gov URL: <http://www.cambridgema.gov/Historic>

William B. King, *Chair*, Bruce A. Irving, *Vice Chair*, Charles M. Sullivan, *Executive Director*

M. Wyllis Bibbins, Robert G. Crocker, Chandra Harrington, Frank Shirley, Jo M. Solet, *Members*

Shary Page Berg, Joseph V. Ferrara, Susannah Barton Tobin, *Alternates*

February 10, 2010

To: Robert Healy

From: Charles Sullivan *CWS*

Re: CRS REQ242620, St. James's Church

The question is whether the city could recapture its CPA grant if "a future project negatively impacts the historic aspects of the property that the City's funding was intended to preserve."

The City could not recapture the grant, but the church is subject to multiple constraints on its ability to alter the building. No changes can occur without the approval of both the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) and the Cambridge Historical Commission (CHC). The primary goal of both agencies is to protect the historic church from adverse effects of alterations or new construction.

St. James's Church is subject to a preservation restriction held by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, which requires MHC approval of any construction, demolition, or alteration of a structure on the site. The Cambridge Historical Commission granted \$100,000 to restore the belfry in 2006-07, and the congregation is committed by contract to maintain the exterior without alteration for ten years; CHC did not insist on stricter terms in view of the State's perpetual restriction.

CHC presently protects St. James's Church as a potential landmark, and is reviewing the proposed Oaktree project to ensure that a) it will not negatively impact the historic aspects of the site and b) that it will generate sufficient income to meet the capital requirements of the historic building. A commitment to this effect will be a condition of the CHC's approval of the project. A copy of these conditions is attached.

Attachment

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OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER



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January 21, 2010

Rev. Holly Antolini, Rector
Saint James's Episcopal Church
1991 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02140

Re: Case 2445, 1991 Massachusetts Avenue

Dear Rev. Antolini,

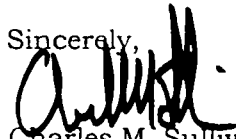
On January 7, 2010, the Cambridge Historical Commission approved in principle Saint James's Episcopal Church's application for demolition of the parish house, minister's study, and classroom wing and construction of a new parish house/residential condominium on the Church premises as proposed by Oaktree Development. The Commission's decision grants a conditional approval for the general location and size of the proposed new building, but with certain conditions and further review of the following matters.

1. Financial rationale. The compelling public interest in allowing this project to proceed is the financial support that has been promised to maintain St. James's historic church building. Please provide further information outlining a) the current and proposed changes in ownership of the current Church property, and b) the financial arrangements between St. James's Church and Oaktree, including income and expenses projected over time.
2. Commitment to maintain the historic church building. Please explain the current projected capital needs of the historic church building and submit a commitment by St. James's Church and/or the Episcopal Diocese that the capital needs as well as the needed expenses of regular maintenance of the historic church building will continue to be met, detailing in reasonable detail the sources for funding such commitments.
3. Commitment to public access. Please provide a commitment by St. James's Church and/or the Episcopal Diocese to assure public access to the proposed garden, subject to the reasonable needs of the abutters for decorum and maintenance of order. Please confirm that ownership of the garden will continue to be held by St. James's and/or the Diocese and summarize any special rights proposed for owners or tenants of the other condominium units.
4. Landscape plan. Please provide a landscape master plan for the entire property, including the new garden design, for approval by the Historical Commission at a future public hearing.

5. Exterior appearance. The Commission understands that the exterior of the new building will continue to evolve as the proponents address the concerns of the preservation agencies, the Planning Board, and the public, and that final approval may not be possible in the immediate future. However, a materials palette can be reviewed at the Commission's next meeting on February 4, 2010.

We understand that the issues involved in the project are complex, and that it may take some time to resolve their details. Please be assured that the Commission supports the goal of this project to assure the continued maintenance of the historic St. James's Church building in good repair in an appropriate urban setting. Feel free to call me or Sarah Burks if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Charles M. Sullivan
Executive Director

cc: Senior Warden, St. James's Episcopal Church
Gwen Noyes, Oaktree Development
Paul Holtz, Massachusetts Historical Commission
Les Barber, Cambridge Planning Board